

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application and indicating that claims 3-6 contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-8 are pending in this application. Claim 2 has been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 and 7 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1 and 7.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 7 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments, as support for the amendments may be found in, for example, paragraph 105 on page 21, and paragraph 113, on page 23 of the specification. The amendments are believed to require no further prior art search. Because the amendments simplify the issues for allowance or appeal, do not raise new issues, and do not constitute new matter, entry thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1 and 3-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner asserts that the claims contain subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In particular, the Examiner notes that claims 1 and 7 refer to an "elastic member being deformable in accordance with a degree of a received impact

to absorb the impact,” while the specification only mentions that the elastic portion of the elastic member elastically deforms in the axial direction, whereby the impact can be absorbed. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited.

Claim 1, as amended, recites, in part, an elastic member disposed at a portion supporting said ball screw nut, the elastic portion of said elastic member elastically deforming in the axial direction, whereby the impact can be absorbed.

Claim 7, as amended, recites, in part, wherein an elastic member portion of an elastic member elastically deforms in the axial direction, whereby the impact can be absorbed, is disposed on a support portion of said ball screw nut.

Claims 1 and 7 have both been amended to recite an elastic portion of an elastic member elastically deforming in the axial direction, whereby the impact can be absorbed. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, in paragraphs 105 and 113 on pages 21 and 23, respectively, of the specification. Applicant believes that the claimed subject matter is described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention, as support for the claim amendments may be found at the above cited locations in the specification. For example, with reference to FIG. 10, if a traveling wheel collides with a paved step of a sidewalk in the vicinity of a neutral position where a rack stroke damper 333 does not function and the impact is transferred to a rack shaft 322, an elastic portion 435b of an elastic member 435 elastically deforms in an axial direction, whereby an impact can be absorbed (paragraph 105).

In view of the above, Applicant believes claims 1 and 7 comply with the written description requirement. Dependent claims 3-6 and 8 comply with the written description requirement for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the Information Disclosure Statements of April 30, 2004, February 10, 2005, July 7, 2005, December 20, 2005, January 12, 2006, and April 17, 2006. However, Applicant has not received an initialed PTO-1449 for the Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 19, 2005. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests consideration and return of an initialed PTO-1449 for the Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 19, 2005.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 10122/005003).

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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